

PLANTING BAHIA GRASS FOR FORAGE AND BIOMASS

MS-ECS-512-04 (JS)
February 2012

Description: Bahia is a deep rooted, sod forming, warm-season perennial grass.

Uses: For grazing, hay, erosion control, waterways, wildlife food, and in a conservation cropping system.

Soil adaptation: Will grow on most soils except those that are highly alkaline. Will not grow well on very poorly drained and wet soils. Not adapted to extreme north Mississippi.

Cultural Specifications

Method of planting: By seeding.

Seedbed preparation: Thoroughly pulverize the soil a minimum of 4 inches deep and harrow to a uniformly smooth surface. Firm with a cultipacker before planting.

Fertilizer and lime: Apply fertilizer and lime according to Extension Service Soils Lab recommendations or the attached nutrient budget. The application of lime and fertilizer will be done in separate operations and incorporated into the soil.

Planting time: March 1 to May 31 and from September 1 to October 31^{1/}. -

Planting rate: Drill 15 pounds or broadcast 25 pounds of clean seed per acre on a firm seedbed.

Planting depth: Cover seed 1/4 inch deep and firm seed into soil with a cultipacker.

Plant establishment: Control annual grasses and weeds by selective grazing, clipping, or spraying. If chemicals are used, follow the MCES-MAFES weed control guidelines. Repair rills and washes.

Plant management and maintenance: Bahia grass will not be grazed until the plants are 6 inches or more in height, except to control competing vegetation. Livestock will be removed from the area as soon as the competing vegetation is grazed down. Apply fertilizer and lime according to Extension Service Soils Lab recommendations or the attached nutrient budget. Maintain a minimum grazing height of two to three inches. Use rotational grazing.

^{1/} Fall seeding will be in combination with fescue, wheat, ryegrass, or cereal rye.

